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# Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2436

Nov. 9, 1989

OUTLOOK '90 BEGINS NOV. 28 -- USDA's 66th Annual Agricultural Outlook Conference will be held Nov. 28-30 in Washington. Speakers include: Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter; U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills; Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Jo Ann Smith; Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Jack Parnell; and FDA Commissioner Frank Young. Some of the invited, but not yet confirmed, speakers include Office of Management and Budget Director Richard Darman and EPA Administrator William Reilly. Over the years, the conference has become a major forum for agriculture, bringing together speakers from government and the private sector to debate prospects for U.S. and world agriculture. Contact: Ray Bridge (202) 447-5447.

PESTICIDE USE DOWN SINCE '82 -- Agricultural pesticide use has declined since 1982 because fewer acres are in crop production, a new USDA report says. The report, "Agricultural Pesticide Use Trends and Policy Issues," covers pesticide use by American farmers between 1964 and 1982 and discusses acreage of major crops treated with insecticides and herbicides through 1988. For a copy of the report (media only, please) or more info, contact: Lindsay Mann (202) 786-1512.

GREEN CHRISTMAS ON THE WAY -- American consumers bought a record 34.3 million Christmas trees in 1988, and are expected to buy more than 35 million this year. U.S. Christmas tree growers have more than 87 million trees of all ages planted on 1 million acres, says USDA Economist Doyle Johnson. Christmas tree farming offers a viable alternative opportunity for many U.S. farmers but, Johnson says, the market can quickly become oversupplied, as with any specialty ag crop. Contact: Doyle Johnson (202) 786-1884.

LAND NOT LEAVING AG -- While the perception may be that farmers are losing ownership and control of the land, a new USDA study says it isn't so. The percentage of all agricultural land moving to non-farmers is very small -- less than two-tenths of one percent per year, says USDA Economist Gene Wunderlich and Washington State University Professor Paul Barkley. While changes are certainly occurring, the study found farmer ownership and control of ag land is still the rule in American agriculture. Contact: Gene Wunderlich (202) 786-1425.

DAVE LANE will leave USDA Nov. 17, after nearly a decade of service as director of information and deputy press secretary. If you'd like to send a letter for a book of letters to Dave, send it unfolded to Shirley Potter, Office of Public Affairs, Rm. 402-A, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Phone (202) 447-8005.

AGRICULTURE IS MORE THAN FARMING -- What do children think when you say "agriculture?" Unfortunately, it may be farming and ultimately "Old MacDonald." In South Carolina, Extension Service officers are taking the opportunity to tell students about agriculture. Their major points include: agriculture is America's largest industry; for every one farmer there are five other people working in agriculture; agriculture will need well-trained people in the future; and agriculture is much more than farming. Contact: W. Kirby Player or Diane G. Smathers (803) 656-3420.

GLOBAL WARMING -- Secretary Yeutter told members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry that USDA is concerned about possible changes in the composition of the earth's atmosphere on agricultural production. USDA's Forest Service is in a unique position to collect data on a long-term basis, he said. "One area of particular interest to American agriculture is the use of agricultural products to replace fossil fuels," he said. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

FUNGUS MAY CONTROL APHID -- A fungus in perennial grasses may help control the Russian wheat aphid, the number one enemy of wheat, barley and other cereal crops, says a USDA scientist. However, the fungus, which is found in tall fescue and perennial ryegrass, is poisonous to cattle and sheep. "One way of dealing with the problem," says Entomologist Stephen L. Clement, "might be to breed a plant that would not be toxic to livestock but still contain aphid-resistant traits." Contact: Stephen L. Clement (509) 335-3572.

AUBURN TO HELP REFOREST HAITI -- Auburn (Ala.) University has a five-year, \$5 million contract to help the island nation of Haiti rebuild its once abundant forests, which have been ravaged by years of overharvesting. The project is due to begin Jan. 1, says Mason Marvel, director of Auburn's Office of International Programs. "Auburn agriculture and forestry experts and social scientists will continue to determine which species of trees are best for Haiti and how these can benefit farm families and rural communities while improving the environment," he said. Contact: Mason Marvel (205) 844-5766.

WHO YOU GONNA CALL FOR TURKEY QUESTIONS? -- USDA's Meat & Poultry Hotline -- 1-800-535-4555. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, USDA has food safety specialists standing by to answer your food safety questions. They'll even be open Thanksgiving Day from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact: Sue Templin (202) 447-5025.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1692 -- On this edition of Agriculture USA, Brenda Curtis captures the essence of the fine art of winemaking from a Chautauqua County, New York winemaker. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1174 -- New food safety proposal; mushroom production and consumption; turkey: reading the label; Chardonnay or Riesling; hot or cooler climate. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1681 -- USDA news highlights; comments on rice program; 1990 cotton program; new pesticide proposal; wine grapes as an alternative crop?; preparing for climate change. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1245 -- Stealth wasps; wasps play dead?; Safer coal burning; beneficial by-product; high protein wheat. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Fri., Nov. 17, feed outlook, cattle on feed; Mon., Nov. 20, catfish, ag. outlook; Tues., Nov. 21, crop/weather update, wheat outlook; Wed., Nov. 22, foreign trade update, poultry production; Mon., Nov. 27, cotton and wool outlook, world sugar outlook, red meat production.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.  
Material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

USDA TV NEWS SERVICE -- (Nov. 9, 11, & 13)

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on New York wine production; DeBoria Janifer reports on dairy production; Joe Courson, Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, reports on extending the turkey season and false turkey economy.

USDA meteorologist Ray Motha on weather and crop situation; USDA economist Kate Buckley with current fruit outlook; USDA economist Craig Osteen on agricultural pesticide use report.

NEXT WEEK -- Turkey Week! Feature reports on Meat and Poultry Hotline; buying a turkey; preparing a turkey and what to do with turkey leftovers.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY . . . . . 7:30-7:45 p.m., EST, Transponder 12D  
SATURDAY . . . . . 10:30-11:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 10D  
MONDAY . . . . . 8:30-9:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 12D  
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFFMIKE

WHEAT...emergence is surprisingly good, considering the dry conditions, but rain is needed or development will be halted, says Sonney Slater (KSAL, Salina, Kans.). The last good soaker was this spring. Says he's hearing an increasing number of farmers who want planting flexibility. Several wanted to grow oats and harvest it for forage but couldn't because of base acreage interference. They're also concerned about paperwork burden and time taken in travel to ASCS offices, asking that program participation be performed more quickly. STATISTICS...can mislead, says Larry Ristvedt (KFGO, Fargo, N.D.). His area is only 1/4 inch below normal annual rainfall, but they've gone two months without rain and they need 3 to 4 inches before the ground freezes. Says there is great interest in the 1990 Farm Bill, especially whether the government will move away from target and loan prices. Producers are not unanimous in moving either direction.

***Farm Broadcasters Letter***



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LATE...harvest continues in sections of Indiana. Dan Modlin (Rural Radio Net, New Palestine) says it's a result of delayed planting this spring due to wetness. Dan also notes an increasing interest in low-input agriculture, and that farmers are telling him they want flexibility to plant according to market needs. SIOUXLAND...Expo will be held Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 in Sioux City, Iowa, notes Randy Rasmussen (KMNS, Sioux City). 200 ag booths are scheduled and they hope to double last year's 13,000 attendance. Afternoon seminars each day include topics such as conservation in the '90s, trade barriers in the '90s, and the 1990 farm bill. NEW...phone number for Brian Baxter and Wayne Jenkins (Morning Ag Report Indianapolis, Ind.), (317) 633-7434/7435.

VIC POWELL  
Chief, Radio & TV Division